

24 June 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
SUBJECT : The Question of an Outside University Course
on US Intelligence

The members of our ad hoc committee* offer the following
agreed views:

1. We find that there has been increasing curriculum interest in course work concerning US intelligence. As one example, at the University of Kansas, a course was given this spring on "Secrecy in US Foreign Policy," which dealt with the role of intelligence in US foreign policy**; we are informed that this course will be offered again in the fall semester of 1974. A number of schools offer course work in which intelligence is one unit or subject within a broader course. One such example is "Conduct and Control of American Foreign Policy," which is being taught this summer by Professor James D. Atkinson at Georgetown University; this course includes the subject of "the increased importance of intelligence agencies in foreign policy." There are scattered such examples elsewhere. And, as a related item, Harry Rositzke has participated as an outside expert in a seminar course at Fletcher on the subject of reporting from abroad.

**The course was designed and taught by Associate Professor Cecil B. Jones, Jr., Cdr., USN, who is with the Navy ROTC program there.

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2. In our view, there is room for more such curriculum attention to the question of US intelligence. We consider it best to think in terms of a unit (or module) of an upper division or graduate course dealing with US foreign policy making, rather than of an entire semester's attention being given to the subject of intelligence.

3. In our view, any approaches to academia on the general subject should be open and overt. CIA would wish to avoid any public or Congressional suspicion that the Agency was engaged in sponsoring or encouraging an unacknowledged domestic activity, no matter how innocent or well-intentioned.

4. There would be both advantages and disadvantages to be expected in any expanded treatment of intelligence in academia. Assuming that the university courses were well done, we could reasonably expect better public understanding of the legitimate role of foreign intelligence in US policy making, and a useful filling in of a void which now exists in academia concerning the services which intelligence performs. At the same time, there would be a risk that some courses or modules would be conducted irresponsibly.

5. It would probably be best to make private approaches to several universities, not just one. A good initial start might be to chat with Atkinson at Georgetown, though we feel it wise to make contact at the same time with other schools which are removed from the D.C.-CIA presence. Specific possibilities might be Professors Richard Ullman at Woodrow Wilson School of International Studies, Princeton; Lincoln Bloomfield at MIT; and Henry Howe Ransom at Vanderbilt. All contacts should be made at the personal level by CIA officers already known to the respective professors. (We're in pretty good shape on this score.)

6. The key to receptivity would lie in the care with which specific suggestions are made to the professors. In our view, approaches might best be along these lines:

- a. The entire matter should be completely overt.

b. The subject could be broached by referring to Sulzberger's January 1974 New York Times column which cites Stevan Dedijer's suggestion that greater public understanding would result from university course treatment of the intelligence process.

c. The Director of CIA thinks that greater public discussion of US foreign intelligence -- warts and all -- would be a good thing, letting the chips fall where they may.

d. The content and form of any course units, or modules, are of course strictly the preserve of the professors, curriculum committees, and universities interested. As, of course, whether to offer any such studies, or not.

e. If interested in offering anything along the line of intelligence, professors might wish to invite a few outside speakers to participate in seminars, either individually or in panels. The fullest and healthiest debate would result from participation by authorities representing all points of view; this should of course include critics of CIA.

f. Should any professor/course be interested, the DCI would be prepared to make senior substantive officers of CIA available for seminar participation, either for individual presentations or as members of panels. The DCI would urge any such CIA officers to be as candid as possible, and to give their own personal views as citizens.

g. In addition to CIA officers still on active duty, there are a number of distinguished senior intelligence alumni* who, if interested, could give their own personal views and perspectives concerning US intelligence.

h. If any professor/universities so requested, CIA could examine the question of possibly preparing a list of sample

*See illustrative list at Annex.

subjects and a broadly representative intelligence reading list. Any such materials should include the organization and function of the intelligence community; the manner in which intelligence products fit into the NSC policy-making processes; the services which intelligence performs with respect to SALT verification and other national questions; and the changing long-run problems which face intelligence, US government, and US society.

7. Also at Annex is a related memo of interest by Mr. Willard Matthias.



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Attachments: As stated

DDI/OPR:  d11/X5491(24 Jun 74)

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Thursday, 27 June

2:30

Director's Office

*File: [unclear]
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Subject: The Question of an Outside University
Course on US Intelligence

Attending: Mr. Colby
Mr. Walsh

[Redacted]

And as many of the ad hoc committee
members as possible

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Approved For Release 2005/08/24 : CIA-RDP80B01495R000200030026-2

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Approved For Release 2005/08/24 : CIA-RDP80B01495R000200030026-2

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4 June 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Training
SUBJECT : University Study of Intelligence

1. The first point to recognize in considering university study of intelligence as a subject (or any studies of the intelligence process or of intelligence as a profession) is that intelligence is a "craft" (as Allen Dulles called it), an art, or a practice. It is not a discipline in the same sense as physics or chemistry. One can study what happens in intelligence work, how it happens, why it happens; one can discuss what ought to be in terms of morals, practical politics, or efficiency. But there are no objective natural laws, no single discipline, no professional mystique.
2. This not to say that the subject should be ignored by scholars, writers, thinkers, and students. As in medical practice or construction engineering, many disciplines are drawn upon, much experience has been accumulated, needs have led to practices, programs have been developed, and results and dangers need to be assessed. It is said of medical practice that a point was reached about 50 years ago when practitioners of medicine were for the first time doing more good than harm. The same might be said of intelligence practitioners - though probably with a date within the last decade. Now is probably a good time, therefore, to sum up and to evaluate what has been going on.
3. A book is needed, and an authoritative one. To use the academic terminology, it should be a book on the "theory" of intelligence, and it should cover both "descriptive theory" and "normative theory"; that is, it should be a generalized report on intelligence systems in operation today and an evaluation of their value, uses, effectiveness, and proper place. Examples and detailed descriptions should be used to give life to the "theory" and not to "expose" secrets.
4. It is in some ways easier to say what such a book would not be than to say what it would be. Sherman Kent's Strategic Intelligence is still the best theoretical work in the field, but is confined to an American approach, to a part of the intelligence process, and to a fairly narrow definition of intelligence subject-matter. It says less about some things and more about others than a comprehensive theory of intelligence should. Harry Ransom's books are scholarly, but not

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theoretical; they are largely research reports on the U.S. intelligence system. Lyman Kirkpatrick's books fluctuate between personal experiences and exposés on the one hand to defensive analysis of U.S. intelligence achievements on the other. He has not hit the right note yet. Allen Dulles's Craft of Intelligence does a great deal to illuminate techniques and the arts, but it is so interlarded with personal reminiscences and stories that it cannot be called a serious theoretical book so much as a good source book. Then there are the exposés, written by those outside or formerly on the inside, intended as money-making ventures pursued out of vindictiveness or sensationalism and written with minimal regard to standards of truth or balance.

5. To be authoritative, a theoretical book on intelligence should be written by some one who knows what the intelligence process really is and who has sufficient access regarding U.S. Soviet, British, and other systems that his generalizations are accurate. Unfortunately, that means in practice that it should be written by some one who is on the inside or has been on the inside and is trusted by those still there. That means that he may not be trusted by those on the outside who will read, study, and evaluate the book. Whatever he writes, he will be attacked by some as an apologist or mouthpiece.

6. The best way to minimize adverse criticism and to gain scholarly acceptance is for the book to be absolutely cold-blooded and apolitical in its descriptive theory; that is, it must not be defensive about the American intelligence system or its achievements and failures, and it must not be anti-Soviet or anti-Communist in its tone when discussing or referring to the Soviet system. In its normative theory it will be aiming at a largely American audience, but it will need to be just as critical of American intelligence organization, methods, operations, and personnel as of any other. The writer would need to be free to criticize or challenge the whole American system or any part of it.

7. What I have laid out is a big order, and not one that the Agency might be willing (or wise) to place. I, for one, am not at all certain that I would like to undertake such an effort. It would be a time-consuming and strenuous effort without any assurance that the final hassle with the protectors and defenders of the system would not result in destroying it.

8. The alternative of doing it entirely outside the system without any Agency assistance or access does not appeal to me very much either. It would be harder work, result in a less good book, and not eliminate a hassle in the last analysis anyway.

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9. In sum, a good book on the theory of intelligence is needed, not only as a possible text for university study of intelligence but to improve the general public's knowledge and understanding. On the other hand, producing a book which would meet the standard of being a good book would be a difficult thing to do given the constraints under which both the Agency and the writer would operate.

10. There is still one other possible way to deal with the aim of "going public" in the universities without crossing a broad and fateful Rubicon. This would be to draw up a list of topics and speakers from among active employees and retirees (but, in my view, principally retirees since they would be under less restraint and probably more acceptable) who could and would conduct seminars or give lectures at universities. The subject matter could range rather widely and cover both substantive matters (the world situation, revolutionary movements in Latin America, the evolution of the Soviet system, developments in the Communist world, etc.) and the intelligence system (the supervision and control of intelligence organizations, definitions of national security, secrecy and security, etc.). It would be important that the persons chosen would be sophisticated, open, academically acceptable, and prepared to be critics of U.S. practice and policy rather than knee-jerk defenders.

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11. A pilot program might be tried with a few people and a few subjects. It might be initiated, after the people and subjects are chosen, by a letter from the Director to a few universities or university centers for international studies. The letter would declare the Director's interest in lifting the veil from intelligence and in making more of the intelligence product and its people available to the academic community. It would state that certain former employees, at his request, had agreed to make themselves available, that they would be free to express their views in the same manner as any academic personnel (classroom lectures and seminar discussions always were privileged communications off the record), and that speakers and participants would be bound only from the disclosure of sensitive sources and methods. In conclusion, he would want to make clear that his interest was in neither defending nor promoting CIA interests, but in widening the understanding of intelligence and making better known its people and its product.

12. Such a program might, if it got off the ground, gradually build up a corpus of papers, doctrines, and persons gradually moving into the public domain which could later be codified into a collection and made available openly or selectively to centers of study in international affairs. But its success would depend upon how it was managed and how well it was done.

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